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instance of Kaiyandira Appayya who saved the honour of his *nāḍ* and its temple by defeating and killing the fighter Kullachenda Chondu. A grateful *nāḍ* decreed that none, not even elders to Appayya, may address him by name. He was not permitted to salute an elder by touching the latter's feet. He was also prohibited from doing a number of things which ordinary Coorgs did, as, for instance, wearing the black Coorg gown (only the white gown is sacred), ploughing, and eating bamboo-shoots.

At the harvest festival the astrologer may choose a young boy to perform the rite of cutting the sheaves. Such a boy is put into a position of ritual respect till the festival is over. He wears a white gown and he may not be touched till he has brought the severed sheaves home. Further, he is not permitted to salute an elder till the ritual is over. In other words the accordance of extreme respect to him necessitates the endowment of seniority for the duration of the ritual.

VIII

The Coorg *okka* seems to be stronger and more sharply structured than the joint family elsewhere in south India, with the possible exception of the matrilineal *tarwāḍ* of the Nāyars, and the patrilineal *illam* of the Nambūdris. Every *okka* has an ancestral house (*ain mané*) built on the ancestral estate. Formerly, most of the members of the *okka* lived in the ancestral house, but nowadays only one or two segments inhabit it, while the rest are scattered all over Coorg and, occasionally, all over India. All the members of the *okka* gather together only on certain occasions, such as the marriage or death of a member, the harvest festival, the festival of the local village-deity, and the periodical ancestor-propitiation.

The ancestral house and estate are accorded respect, and it is usual to have ancestor-shrines (*kaimaḍa*) or ancestor-platforms (*kāraṇava taré*) near the ancestral house. Coorgs, even those who are living away from the ancestral house, have some attachment towards it, and this expresses itself in having marriages and ancestor-propitiations performed there in preference to anywhere else. Also, a Coorg prefers to be buried after death in his ancestral burial-ground which is a corner of the ancestral estate used for disposal of the dead members of the *okka*.

The ancestral house is usually a substantial building of stone and

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mortar, with solid, carved woodwork. Masons and carpenters from Malabar build them, and Coorg ancestral houses consequently resemble greatly the houses of well-to-do Nāyars. The house is usually situated on an elevation, and a narrow, high-walled and winding lane (*ōṇi*) leads up to it. From the windows in the upper story one usually obtains a fine view of the surrounding country. Formerly, in the days when feuds, or *kuḍupi* (*kuḍippaka* in Malayāḷam), between joint families were common, and a surprise raid (*kaḷḷa paḍé*) from a hostile *okka* was always a possibility, anyone coming with unfriendly intentions exposed himself to view from the windows of the ancestral house. The house was built like a fortress and was able to stand a siege for several days.

The ancestral estate usually includes an extent of jungle, some grazing land, and valleys in which rice is grown. The jungle provided the household with the necessary timber and fuel. A part of the jungle is reserved for burying or cremating the dead members of the *okka*. There is a kitchen-garden near the main building. A well or pond provides water for domestic purposes.

Every house includes an ancestor-shrine or ancestor-platform. Uncarved stones, representing cobra-deities, are planted on platforms built around the trunk of a milk-exuding tree. There may also be other uncarved stones representing minor deities like Pūda and Guḷika.

According to Lewis Rice,[1] in the seventies of the last century the Coorg *okka* frequently consisted of twenty or thirty, and occasionally even fifty members, all residing under one roof. He further tells us that previous to the invasion of Coorg by Tippu Sultan in the latter half of the eighteenth century, it was not uncommon to find in a house thirty or forty adult male relatives living together. Many *okkas* seem to have had 120 to 150 people, all living in the ancestral house.

Nowadays the *okka* commonly consists of two or three generations of agnatically-related males, their wives, and their children. Girls born in the *okka* go out on marriage as residence is patrilocal, but it sometimes happens that a woman remains unmarried for a variety of reasons. In such a case she stays in her natal *okka*. An *okka* also includes the widow of a deceased member. As mentioned earlier, leviratic unions are preferred amongst Coorgs, and a widow

[1] *Mysore and Coorg*, Bangalore, 1878, vol. iii, p. 329.

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The counterpart of the ear-boring *mangala* for a girl was the *mangala* performed when she attained puberty. This was called '*polé kaṇḍa mangala*' or '*mangala* performed on the sighting of defilement'. The menstrual flow was regarded as defiling, and formerly a woman observed seclusion for three days during her periods. *Mangala* was also performed when a woman became pregnant for the first time (*kuḷiyammé mangala*). A woman who had given birth to ten children, all of whom were alive, was entitled to a form of *mangala* known as *paitāṇḍek aḷapa*.

A man who killed a panther or tiger had the right to *nari mangala* or 'tiger *mangala*' being performed in his honour. Marriage increased a man's status, and a bachelor was regarded as socially and ritually inferior to a married man. *Mangala* was performed to a bachelor's corpse before burying or cremating it, presumably in order to raise the status of the soul of the dead bachelor.

A man who had lost two wives in succession was ritually married to a plantain tree before marrying his third wife. The marriage to the plantain tree was called '*bāḷek mangala*', or 'plantain *mangala*', and the tree was cut down soon after the *mangala*.

The number three, in certain contexts, is considered very unlucky everywhere in south India. When a man has lost his first two wives in succession, and intends marrying again, the third wife is considered certain to share the fate of the first two. The performance of '*bāḷek mangala*' and the cutting down of the tree soon after frees the human wife from the fate which would have otherwise overtaken her.

Formerly when a man built a new house he performed '*mané mangala*' or 'house *mangala*'. *Mangala* was performed for the head of the house on this occasion. Another form of *mangala* which has entirely disappeared now is '*ettu mangala*' or 'ox *mangala*'.

The ideal and usual marriage in Coorg is for a virgin to marry a bachelor and this is called '*kanni mangala*' or 'virgin *mangala*'. The marriage rites are fullest when a virgin marries a bachelor, and they are abbreviated to some extent when a widower marries a virgin. They are still further abbreviated when a widow marries a widower, and many old Coorgs would even refuse to accord to such a marriage the name of *mangala*.

The ritual that is performed at the 'marriage of a virgin' may be divided into two parts, one which might be called the *mangala* part, and the other the non-*mangala* part. The *mangala*-part of marriage

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776 778 considered sacred, and it is not permitted to cut it down. A woman in her periods is not allowed to go near the platform as cobra-deities are considered to be specially sensitive to defilement. If this rule is not respected, she, and probably the *okka* of which she is a member, will suffer misfortune. The cobra is a sacred creature and he who kills it will suffer from a skin disease like leucoderma.

243 778 There is an attitude of ritual respect towards the ancestral rice-field. This is specially noticeable when the crop is standing: a man may not wear sandals while walking through it, or hold an umbrella over his head, or whistle.

The rice-field is divided into a number of ridged-up plots and the central plot of the rice-field is regarded as particularly sacred. [846] Formerly it was the custom to bury the umbilical cord of the eldest son in the central plot. A man is supposed to have a special affinity to the place where his umbilical cord is buried. If a Coorg boy is found going to a particular place frequently, his elders twit him, [871] 'Is your umbilical cord buried there?' Nowadays the umbilical cord is buried in the yard of the palace of Mercara, or in a school-compound, because Coorgs want their sons to do well in examinations and become high government officials.

764 778 A part of the ancestral estate is used for burying or cremating the dead members of the *okka*. The part where corpses are buried is called *kēkaḷa* while the adjoining part used for cremation is called *tūṭangaḷa*.[1] It is sacred, but in an undesirable way: the term 'bad-sacred' has been used to denote such a ritual condition. (Bad-sacredness includes within itself both 'defilement and 'inauspiciousness'.) [783] A visit to the burial-ground defiles a person and a bath is necessary to restore him to normal ritual status.

764 775 The burial-ground for children may be near the house, whereas that for adults must be as far away as possible. The ghosts of adults [858] are harmful, while children's ghosts are comparatively harmless. An adult has a social personality, whereas a child does not have one. An adult occupies a social role or several social roles. The ghost of a headman or hero or a particularly evil man is more powerful than [745] that of an ordinary man. The mourning-period also varies according to age and social importance of the deceased.

[1] Amongst Coorgs, the corpses of elders and important people are cremated, [564] while the corpses of children and unimportant people are buried. The Brahmins, however, cremate all dead persons except infants, and in many parts of south India castes which want to rise in status give up burial for cremation.

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V

It is not only places which have ritual value, but also points of the compass. East is a sacred direction because the sun rises there, and Hindus in all parts of India regard the sun as a deity.

The ancestral house faces east and so does the ancestor-shrine. The lip of the sacred wall-lamp in the central hall faces east. The subject of a *mangala* ceremony sits facing east.

On getting up from his bed in the morning a Coorg salutes the wall-lamp and the sun. The cultivation of rice is accompanied by ritual at every stage, and on all these ritual occasions the subject of the rites begins by saluting the sun.

South is an inauspicious or bad-sacred direction. A corpse is buried or cremated with its head towards south. In Sanskritic Hinduism, south is the abode of Yama, the god of death.

Coorgs, like Hindus in other parts of India, regard east as a good-sacred direction and south as a bad-sacred direction. East is associated with Chūriya (sun-god), and south with Yama. Both these deities have an All-India spread. Coorgs worship these two deities along with other Hindus all over India. The possession of common values binds people together and Coorgs form a single community with Hindus all over India when they worship the same deities.

VI

Mūrta is the crucial part of *mangala*, and the rites performed prior to *mūrta* prepare the subject for it. The subject is shaved by the barber, given a bath by three married women, and dressed in ritual robes and ornaments before sitting down to *mūrta*. Shaving, the first of several preparatory rites, will be briefly considered here.

It is necessary to repeat here that shaving is done by barbers who form a caste. Contact with the barber defiles a member of a higher caste, and consequently shaving is invariably followed by a purificatory bath.

The subject of *mangala* wears a white cotton *kupya* while he is being shaved by the barber. The *kupya* is like a dressing-gown, and it is either black or white. The white gown is of cotton, has long sleeves, and covers the neck up to the throat. This is the traditional ritual dress of Coorgs. The black gown is a Westernized version of

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century. The exclusive shaving of the face as distinct from the shaving of the face along with the head also came into vogue at the same time, and moustaches, which were only removed at the death of a very close relative, began to disappear entirely.

Marriage conferred on a man the right to have his head shaved periodically, and a bachelor was not entitled to it unless he had undergone the ear-boring *mangala*. The latter ritual conferred social adulthood on a male: in the folksong about the hero Kaiyandira Appayya it is seen that he successfully claims to be an adult on the strength of the fact that his friends, all boys tending cattle, performed this ritual for him in the jungle.

The ear-boring *mangala* has now entirely disappeared, and I learn that even fifty years ago it was only performed very rarely, and that, too, as a votive offering to a deity. But though the ritual had disappeared the concepts associated with it continued to exist for some time afterwards. It was considered improper for an adult to be without ear-rings, and such men were not admitted to the temple of Iggutappa in Nālknāḍ. If a Coorg died without his ears being bored, the corpse's ears were pierced before burial.

The ear-boring *mangala* was the first of several *mangalas* for a male, and the head was shaved for the first time on this occasion. The performance of this *mangala* conferred certain privileges on the individual in question, one of which being that he could have his face shaved periodically by a barber.

At the various *mangalas* shaving is a preparatory ritual act. On these occasions it is followed by a bath and by the wearing of ritually pure robes. These preliminary rites make the subject pure, and while in this condition he performs certain rites, or others perform certain rites towards him.

The form of shaving prevalent normally is different from that prevalent at mourning. Normally the tuft at the crown and the moustache have to be left untouched at shaving, while at mourning it is obligatory, at any rate for the chief male mourners, to have their heads and faces shaved entirely. Other close relatives who are junior to the dead person are recommended to follow the example of the chief mourners, but it does not seem to be obligatory for them. The mourners get themselves shaved on the morning following the disposal of the corpse; and this shave marks the beginning of ritual mourning. The mourners may not have another shave while ritual mourning lasts. In the case of the eldest son and

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585 Nowadays, the black, woollen, half-sleeved gown is coming into fashion. Every Coorg who can afford it sports it at festivals, dances, 292 and weddings. It has become a mark of wealth and status, and the [556] white cotton gown which has superior ritual status is becoming almost a symbol of poverty. But even now the subject of a *mangala*, as distinct from others who are not as important, wears a white gown. Any suggestion that he should discard the white gown in favour of the black would meet with opposition from one and all. It may be mentioned here that the hero Kaiyandira Appayya, to whom reference has already been made, was prohibited from doing a number of things which an ordinary Coorg did, such as handling a plough, eating bamboo shoots, and wearing a black gown. He was required to wear a white gown always.

292 The corpse, which is in some respects treated as similar to the 765 subject of a *mangala*, is dressed in a white gown, but with the [764] underside on top if it is going to be cremated, and with the left side over the right if it is going to be buried.

Formerly, mourners also wore the white gown, but in a particular way: the right hand did not pass through the right arm of the gown, but instead it was allowed to hang limp from the right shoulder. The gown was secured at the waist by a black sash instead of a red one.

The white gown is worn on all important ritual occasions. Ritual occasions are either auspicious or inauspicious, and there is need to differentiate between them. Hence, though the subject of *mangala*, corpse and mourner, are all dressed in a white gown, the mode of wearing it is different in each case. The subject of *mangala* wears it in the normal way, while in the case of a corpse it is reversed, and in the case of the mourner the right arm drops loosely from the shoulder.

Nowadays, however, all active mourners wear a white waist-cloth (*muṇḍu*) and shoulder-cloth (*tuṇḍu*). In the case of women mourners, two of the four corners of the shoulder-cloth are tied in a knot in front in such a way that the breasts are covered. A waist-cloth and shoulder-cloth are normally the ritual dress of Hindus in Malabar.

either party. Between Mercara and the Wynāḍ border, in Kiggaṭnāḍ, only the bride wears a veil, and the groom removes her veil prior to consummating the marriage on the second night. The veil is generally uncommon among Hindus in south India and is worn only by the women of the ruling castes. It is likely that the women of the royal families in pre-British Coorg wore the veil regularly.

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Red colour seems to have greater ritual value than white, and silk greater ritual value than cotton. For instance, at a wedding, the ceiling of the sacred central hall is covered with white cloths, except for the part just above the bridal seat which is covered with red cloths. All the bride's clothes are of red silk, and according to the ancient marriage song the groom wore a red silk gown and red silk turban.

When a man (or woman) dies his relatives have to carry gifts of white cotton cloths to him. But the dead man's sisters' children, or dead woman's brothers' children, have to carry gifts of red silk cloths. Those who bring gifts of red silk cloths are considered to be closer relatives than those who bring white cotton cloths. It is those who bring red silk cloths who take part, along with the dead man's eldest son and widow, in the important pot-breaking rite (*koḍa kukkuva*) which ritually severs the dead man's connexion with his living relatives.

The ritual preference of silk to cotton is widespread all over peninsular India among Brahmins, and it is very likely that Coorgs borrowed the use of red silk from the Brahmins of the west coast. The use of red silk in ritual is not very clearly defined—at least it is not as clearly defined as the use of the white gown.

The turban is worn on very important auspicious occasions like a wedding. On less formal occasions a Coorg ties a scarf round his head. Both men and women tie a scarf round their heads out of doors. But no form of head-dress, turban, scarf, or cap, is worn inside the house. When a kinswoman comes into the house the hostess removes her scarf. Failure to do so would be an insult, as it would amount to treating the kinswoman as a stranger. Absence of head-dress indicates the intimacy that prevails among the members of a household. It is presumably for this reason that everyone, including the senior mourners, has to remove his scarf and sandals before the corpse. Such removal shows that the dead man and mourners are members of one household. They are kindred, and kinship is intimacy. When two people are able to appear before each other without scarves they are intimate, they are members of the same household. It is an expression of the solidarity prevalent between the two.

There is a great social and ritual elaboration of the distinction between a married woman and a widow. A married woman or *garati* is one whose first and only husband is alive. Remarried

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widows and divorcées have a slightly higher status than widows, but this does not entitle them to be classed as *garatis*.

The Coorg widow's dress consists of a white cotton *sari*, a white cotton blouse, and a white cotton scarf. *None* of these clothes may have a coloured border. The corpse of a widow, too, is dressed in clothes without a coloured border. The corpse of a married woman, on the other hand, is dressed in a coloured *sari* with a coloured, or silver, or gold, border.

The distinction between a widow and married woman is absolutely fundamental in every part of south India. Married women have a great number of privileges, whereas widows have a great number of ritual disabilities. A married woman is auspicious, she is everywhere welcome, whereas a widow is inauspicious, and she is unwelcome everywhere. This deep cleavage expresses itself in the matter of dress also.

IX

After being dressed in ritual robes, the subject of *mangala* salutes the various lamps in the house before sitting down for *mūrta*. On either side of him is a dish-lamp placed on a tripod stool. The dish-lamp is indispensable on every ritual occasion.

Every day, early in the morning and again just before nightfall, the housewife sweeps the house and sprinkles it with a purifying solution of cow-dung. She then lights the wall-lamp and salutes it. While saluting it she prays to the ancestors of the *okka*, to Mother Kāvēri and Shiva. Every member of the *okka* salutes the wall-lamp after getting up in the morning, and again at night.

The ending of night as well as of day is marked by sweeping and purifying the house, and by lighting and saluting the wall-lamp. The period between the ending of the day and the beginning of night is regarded as a critical time, and children are not given food or allowed to sleep at that time. This is a common south Indian custom.

It is regarded as a bad omen if the lamp goes out while a Coorg is having his dinner. The sudden extinction of the lamp indicates the approach of disaster. The diner gets up from his meal, cleans the dish and washes his hands. He sits down to dinner again a few minutes later. This makes it a different meal altogether and not the one that was interrupted.

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A Coorg never says that a lamp has gone out. He says instead, 784
'the lamp is brighter' (*boḷicha dumb pōchi*). This kind of euphemism 354
is employed on other occasions also: the Koḍagi word for a tiger is '*nari*' which means a jackal in every other Dravidian language.

Again, no Coorg says that 'a cobra has bitten So-and-so'. He says instead, 'a creeper has bitten So-and-so'. Finally, after nightfall no one mentions the barber. If they have to refer to him they say instead, 'the scraper of heads'. Amongst the Hindus in Mysore the barber is referred to after nightfall as 'one whose name may not be mentioned'. A barber is inauspicious, and contact with him is [305]
defiling. He is also associated with inauspicious occasions such as death, as mourners have to be shaved. Women specially dread the barber, as until recently among the highest castes widows were required to have their heads shaved entirely.

In every one of the cases we have mentioned circumlocution is employed to avoid reference to an unpleasant object or event. The bite of a snake is always unpleasant and frequently fatal; a barber suggests death and widowhood; and it is much better to think of a tiger as a jackal. The euphemistic reference to the extinction of a [596]
lamp has a similar purpose: a lamp is the symbol of the solidarity and strength of the *okka*, and its sudden extinction refers to the decay and extinction of the *okka*. It also refers to the withdrawal of [782]
the protective power of the ancestors and the deities who are invoked while saluting a lamp.

Among the Hindus of the eastern plains it is obligatory to light a 788
lamp in the house as soon as it is dark. A house without a lamp 354
suggests that everyone is dead in the house, or that they are too poor to light one.

The ritual attitude prevalent towards the domestic lamp is easily [171]
extended to fire generally, and to the sun. These again provide [821]
points of contact with Sanskritic or All-India Hinduism.

The kitchen stove is a convenient focus for the general ritual 872
attitude existing towards fire. The kitchen stove, like the domestic 596
lamp, stands for the unity, strength, and protective power of the *okka* and this fact finds ritual expression. When a member of the [764]
okka is dead and it is decided to cremate his body, the funeral pyre is fired with a torch lighted from embers from the kitchen stove. The torch is made with twigs collected from the domestic burial-ground.

The belief in the protective power of *teḷi nīr* is again the result of 372
783

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While white rice is used in auspicious ritual, rice yellowed with turmeric is used in inauspicious ritual. At the very important funeral rite of 'breaking the pot', each of the mourners sprinkles a little rice, yellowed with turmeric, on the corpse before saluting it.

The ritual sprinkling of rice on objects and persons usually accompanies salutation. In *mūrta*, the sprinkling of rice occurs with salutation and with the giving of milk and money presents. All these rites affirm a bond which exists between the subject and all those who perform them to him. These are members of his kin-group, caste-group, and village. They constitute his community. These rites of solidarity which affirm the existence of a bond between the subject and the community serve also to stress the importance of the particular *mangala* the subject is undergoing.

It is entirely proper that rice and not any other grain or article should be used in the most common solidarity rite in Coorg. Even today rice has a very important place in the social and economic life of Coorgs, and formerly, before the introduction of coffee and oranges into Coorg, it was the most valuable crop.[1]

XI

The ritual of giving milk to the subject follows the sprinkling of rice on him. This, like the other ritual acts mentioned earlier, is performed at every *mangala* including marriage. While the structure of every *mangala* is, broadly speaking, the same, there are minor differences between one *mangala* and another. The ritual giving of milk at marriage makes the meaning of ritual milk-giving particularly clear.

On the first day of marriage *mūrta* is performed separately for the bride and groom *in their respective homes*. The bride's relatives and the high-caste members of her village perform *mūrta* to her *in her house*, and the groom's relatives and members of his village perform *mūrta* to him *in his house*.

On the second day, the groom's relatives go in state to the bride's house, and the groom's relatives perform *mūrta* to the bride. For this purpose *they carry some of their own rice and milk with them*.

The bride's relatives perform *mūrta* to the groom and, finally,

[1] Among the Brahmins of south India the assembled priests and relatives bless the bridal pair by sprinkling on them rice yellowed with turmeric.

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the groom performs *mūrta* to the bride. Later in the day the bride leaves her natal home and accompanies the groom to his home. Relatives of the groom who did not accompany him to the bride's house now perform *mūrta* to the bride.

When a marriage takes place, it is not only two persons who come together but two kin-groups. They come together through the acquisition of two common objects of interest. But before marriage the bride was only an object of common interest to her natal kin-group, and the groom to his natal kin-group.

When a marriage takes place, there is a change in the social personalities of the bride and groom. It gives them new rights and obligations. Some of this is symbolized in marriage ritual: for instance, the bride loses her rights in her natal *okka* and acquires them, instead, in her conjugal *okka*; she carries water from the groom's *okka's* well to his kitchen; and finally she carries manure to the groom's ancestral paddy-field.

Every *mangala* marks a change in the social personality of the subject: he moves from one position in the status system to another. On such an occasion the group concerned performs towards him a series of solidarity rites. The performance of these solidarity rites shows that the group concerned authorizes and approves of the change in the social personality of the subject. A casteman or relative who fails to attend the particular *mangala* is understood as not approving of it. Relations between him and those who attend become strained. He has effected a breach in the solidarity.

Like the sprinkling of rice, the giving of milk is a common ritual act in Coorg. At the naming ceremony of a child, the mother puts the infant into the cradle and says, 'Chengappa, get up to eat rice mixed with milk.' She smears the child's tongue with a little cream, using a gold coin to scoop the cream contained in a bowl.

A child is given solid food to eat six months after birth: and this food usually consists of cooked rice mixed with milk and sugar. On the second day after marriage, when the bride enters her conjugal home, her mother-in-law combs her hair and gives her rice mixed with milk to eat. The latter dish is considered a great delicacy.

Milk is used not only on good-sacred occasions but also on bad-sacred occasions. When an infant dies, a coconut-shell containing milk from its mother's breasts is placed over the grave; and if it is a few months old, rice mixed with milk is placed there instead.

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764 272 On the day after the cremation of a corpse, the dead man's son goes to the burial-ground, and on the spot where the dead man was buried he pours successively a vessel of water and a vessel of milk.

Milk is a very valued commodity, and the ritual giving of milk [431] indicates that solidarity is, or ought to be, prevalent between the giver and the recipient. It is also a symbol of pleasure, luxury, and [828] happiness, and consequently mourners abstain from it while they [765] offer it to the spirit of the departed person. The mourners also abstain from other valued objects like curd, honey, mushrooms, meat, and betel leaves and areca-nut, which are again offered to the dead person's spirit.

A kinsman who drank milk during the mourning-period would be guilty of impiety towards the dead person. In the neighbouring Kannaḍa country it is considered a very bitter abuse to tell a person, 'I will drink milk when you die.'

[302] The use of milk is extended from solidarity rites to other rites which have either no reference to solidarity at all or at best only a very indirect one. While ordinarily water is used in shaving a man, milk is used while shaving a bridegroom. The dish containing the milk and the shavings is later emptied at the foot of a milk-exuding [844] tree like the jack tree (*artocarpus integrifolia*). The placenta is similarly buried at the foot of a milk-exuding tree. One of the five pillars of a marriage *pandal* has to be a branch of a milk-exuding tree. After a corpse has been cremated the bones are consigned either to a river or buried at the foot of a milk-exuding tree. At [765] mourning, leaf-cups made from the leaves of the jack tree are used to offer food to the spirit of the departed person.

XII

585 431 Everyone who performs *mūrta* to the subject should give a money-gift, and the three married women are expected to give a gold coin (*pombaṇa*) each. At a wedding the mother of the bride (or groom), and the groom while performing *mūrta* to the bride, have to give a purse containing several coins, one of which should be a gold coin.

A money-gift has to be given not only at *mangala* but on other occasions as well: relatives who come to pay their last respects to the dead man perform a series of solidarity rites at the end of which they give a money-gift. Again, an infant has to be given a money-

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gift on the occasion of giving him (or her) a name. In fact, a relative who is seeing an infant for the first time must give a money-gift. On the second day of marriage, when the bride visits the groom's house, she gives a money-gift to every infant in her conjugal *okka*. Later the groom does the same in the bride's *okka*.

It is hardly necessary to state that the giving of a money-gift does not always constitute a solidarity rite. It may be given in return for a service, which, however, might be purely nominal. A guest to a wedding gives a *paṇa* to each of the two girls holding a dish-lamp in his honour at the entrance to the bridal house.

At the wedding the elders of the groom's village publicly examine the box containing the bride's trousseau. They are collectively given five *paṇas* (fifteen annas), and this money is called 'witness money' (*sākshi paṇa*). Subsequently, if there is a dispute as to the contents of the bride's box the elders will be called upon to give evidence. Such disputes do not normally occur, however, except in the event of the woman wanting to return to her natal *okka* on becoming a widow, or after being divorced. Again, when the bride's family friend consents to hold himself responsible for her good behaviour in the groom's house he is paid a *paṇa* as 'witness-money'. The groom's family friend is paid similarly for holding himself responsible for the good behaviour of the groom's relatives.

In the above instances the passing of money from one hand to another has the effect of sealing a contract. It may also be interpreted as payment in advance for some service to be rendered in the future. An occasion might not, and usually does not, arise requiring the elders or either of the family friends to render the service expected of them or him, and the strictly nominal character of the payment might be attributed to this fact. Such an interpretation is plausible, but does not appear to us to be true. In the instance just mentioned the emphasis seems to be much more on the fact of the acceptor of the money binding himself to a particular course of action in the future rather than on the services to be rendered in the future.

A gold coin is placed in the mouth of a dead man if the latter was a married man. This coin is referred to as 'money for the road'. It probably refers to the expenses which the dead man's soul incurs on its journey. No gold coin is, however, placed in the mouth if the dead man was a bachelor, or had the reputation of being very wicked. In such a case a very bitter fruit called '*kānyaṇat kāyi*' is

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764 placed in his mouth. A bachelor and a wicked man are both in a spiritually unsatisfactory condition, and it is believed that their ghosts are likely to trouble survivors. The bitter fruit is an appropriate symbol of his unsatisfactory spiritual condition, of the fact that he is a danger to the surviving relatives and others.

553 It may be recalled here that a gold coin is used in ritually feeding a child on the occasion of conferring a name on it. A gold (or silver) coin which is used in solidarity rites itself becomes a symbol of a satisfactory spiritual and ritual condition. It was seen that this happened to a much greater extent in the case of milk.

XIII

782 The various forms of salutation prevalent among Coorgs have already been described. It is interesting to note that there is no difference between the mode of salutation adopted towards another Coorg and that adopted towards a deity. A deity might be saluted either by bowing the head and folding the palms at the chest, or by first of all prostrating oneself completely before the image and then getting up and bowing the head and folding the palms. The former mode is adopted normally towards the wall-lamp, while the latter is adopted at a famous temple, or towards the wall-lamp on a special occasion.

[171] The Coorg form of salutation is prevalent among Hindus all over India, and it is only one of several instances where Coorgs participate in a ritual idiom common to all Hindus.

576 Salutation brings into relief a particular aspect of solidarity rites: solidarity does not necessarily mean the equality of the persons participating in the particular solidarity rite. Conversely, inequality between the participants does not denote lack of solidarity. When a young Coorg salutes his father's elder brother he is not claiming to be his uncle's equal. The very act of salutation expresses that the junior is inferior to the senior: the former's head is bent and he touches the latter's feet with both hands. The junior's hands are later carried back to his forehead.

In fact, a junior who failed to show the respect due to a senior by not saluting him would be effecting a breach in the solidarity. Hostility would be the result. Everyone would say that such a youth did not know his place, that his elders had not brought him up properly, and so on.

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XIV

533 A band is considered essential to every ritual occasion: at *mangalas*, calendar festivals, and festivals of village-deities a band plays most of the time.

[585] A close relative comes to a wedding accompanied by his own band. He must be received by the hosts with band, and again, when he departs, the hosts must accompany him a little distance with their band leading the way. When the relative finally takes leave of the hosts he pays the latters' band three *paṇas*, one for the men blowing the horns, another for the pipers, and the third for the drummers.

● [764] Relatives coming to pay their last respects to the dead man are also required to be accompanied by their band. If they are not accompanied by their own band, they arrange to hire the services of the local band, at some distance from the mourning-house.

[765] A band plays before a mourning-house too, but the beat (*chāvu paré* = death-beat) employed on this occasion is distinctive, and it may not be employed on an auspicious occasion.

533 585 [556] The presence of a band testifies to the social importance of the occasion or person. A wedding at which there was no band would be inconceivable to a Coorg. Again, if at a wedding an important guest were not received with a band, he would regard it as an insult. Coorgs have an elaborate code of courtesy, and this has to be scrupulously observed.

[574] The *okkas* of the bride and groom have each to give several dinners during the wedding. These dinners are of two kinds: one in which the chief guests are the members of the particular bridal party's own village, and another in which the important guests are from other villages.

621 585 574 The above distinction is important, as it throws light on the social structure. A village forms a unity, and ideally speaking it is not only the bride's (or groom's) *okka*, but her (or his) entire village which ought to act as hosts. Formerly they did not sit down to dinner with the guests from other villages, but waited on the latter along with the members of the host *okka*. They sat down to dinner later.

On the day before the wedding, every house in the village has to send one man and one woman to the bridal house to help in the wedding work. They have to do every kind of work which the

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with a condition of ritual purity. It is obvious that in the above instances physical dirt has been identified with ritual impurity. Purification consists in taking a bath and wearing pure clothes. Dirt, then, is seen as ritual impurity, and cleanliness as ritual purity. It is necessary, however, to stress that they are ritual and not natural states.

Birth and death both result in ritual impurity for the entire household for several days. This ritual impurity will not disappear even if the impure person has a dozen baths a day. But, once the prescribed period is over, the individual attains his normal ritual status after a bath. It is necessary to stress that ritual purity is fundamentally different from cleanliness, though they overlap frequently. A simple association of ritual purity with cleanliness, and ritual impurity with dirtiness, would be a neat arrangement, but it would falsify the facts. One comes across ritually pure robes which are very dirty, and snow-white clothes which are ritually impure.

A corpse is ritually impure and contact with it results in pollution. The crow, which is a scavenger bird, and is everywhere associated with death, is also impure. The spirits of dead ancestors assume the forms of crows on certain ritual occasions when they are propitiated. The conclusion of funeral rites is marked everywhere by the offer of balls of rice to the dead man's spirit. These balls are kept either on the roof of the house or on the ground at some distance from the house. If the crows fall to these balls soon, it is believed that the dead man is satisfied. Delay in the arrival of the crows indicates that the dead man is dissatisfied.

If the crows perch on a roof and caw, the death of someone under that roof is presaged. A man who sees two crows mating will die soon after unless he sends a false message announcing his death to his kinsmen. Nowadays it is not unusual for a person who has seen two crows mating to send a telegram announcing his death to his kinsmen.[1] The mating of crows means their increase, and the man who sees it is likely to die. The way he can counteract this is by announcing his death as soon as he has seen the crows mate. The ends of justice are met by such an announcement.

If a crow's droppings fall on a person, he or she will have to dip in a tank or river a thousand times. This is extremely inconvenient,

[1] Needless to say, this causes the unfortunate kinsfolk a considerable amount of worry and suffering.

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but not, however, the first-grade mourners, who are only freed at the *dīkshé uttuva* ceremony, which is performed long after the *māda*. Until then, honey and milk may not be consumed, ornaments and coloured cloths may not be worn. A woman mourner has to wear the mourning uniform of white shoulder-cloth and waist-cloth. A man mourner may not have his face or head shaved.

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VIII

The offer of food to the spirit of the departed person is a dominant motif in Coorg funeral ritual. When the corpse is still seated in the paved yard of the house, one of the mourners carries some cooked rice on a plantain leaf and places it at the bottom of the lane leading to the house. He also places on the plantain leaf a lighted cotton wick on a piece of coconut: this serves as a lamp. As he does this, double shots are fired from a gun. He salutes the leaf as he would a corpse, and other mourners follow him in saluting the food-offering and lamp.

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The family friend places a food-bundle on the grave directly above the spot where the corpse's head rests. In case of cremation, the bundle is placed at the spot where the head lay before cremation.

On the second, third, and fourth days, the first-grade mourners offer raw, uncooked rice to fish in a pond or lake, and this is called 'water sacrifice' (*nīr beli*). On the fifth, sixth, and seventh days, 'shore sacrifice' (*karé beli*) is performed: the first-grade mourners go to the pond or lake, and each of them cooks a little rice on an improvised stove on the edge of the pond or lake. No vessel may be used for cooking this rice. A flat bit of a broken pot is used instead. This rice is then removed on to a plantain leaf which is kept on a purified spot near the stove.

On the eighth, ninth, and tenth days food is offered to crows. A sacrificial post (*beli mara*) of wood is erected in the yard before the mourning-house. A plank is fixed horizontally to the top of the post. The dead person's spouse cooks rice and prepares vegetable curry, and these are mixed and placed on a plantain leaf. The leaf is then kept on the plank on top of the post. As he (or she) keeps this, he claps his hands and shouts '*kā, kā*' (in imitation of the cawing of crows).

On the eleventh (*pannand*) day, each of the second-grade

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unrelated to the rest of the structure of the festival of a village-deity.[1]

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X

Some of the ritual acts performed and practices observed at mourning are obviously reversals or inversions of the acts and practices performed on good-sacred or auspicious occasions. For instance, the corpse is made to lie on a mat spread with the underside on top. It is true that like the subject of *mangala* the corpse is dressed in a white gown, but the latter is reversed in some way: it is worn with the underside uppermost, or with the left end of the gown coming on top of the right end. On auspicious occasions the proper side has to be on top, and the right end should rest on top of the left.

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After the corpse has been laid in the grave, the surviving spouse throws three handfuls of earth into the grave. He (or she) twists his hand (*terangai* = twisted hand) while throwing the earth into the grave. The eldest son and other relatives follow the surviving spouse. If the corpse is going to be cremated instead of being buried, the surviving spouse sets fire to the pyre by thrusting a firebrand into it. Again, he employs the twisted hand while setting fire to the pyre (*terangolli* = twisted firebrand).

In ritual circumambulation, movement in the clockwise direction is prescribed for auspicious occasions, while anti-clockwise movement is prescribed for inauspicious occasions. The groom goes round the sacred tripod stool clockwise. A devotee goes round the temple clockwise. But the mourners go round the funeral pyre in the anti-clockwise way. Similarly, the bier is thrice carried round the paved yard before the mourning-house, the bier carriers moving anti-clockwise.

There is an interesting little problem here: while clockwise movement is restricted to auspicious occasions and anti-clockwise movement to inauspicious occasions, on both kinds of occasion the subject goes round thrice. That is to say, both the mourner as well as the groom goes round *thrice*. How is it that the principle

[1] The restrictions observed during the village-deity's festival vary from village to village. As regards the food restrictions observed on the fast day the general idea seems to be to avoid everyday diet and to starve oneself as far as possible. In some festivals only roots and boiled plantains are allowed. Steam-baked pudding (*puṭṭ*), a favourite dish of Coorgs, is prohibited in some places. Green gram *pāyasa* (liquid dish) is generally allowed except in a few villages.

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764 784 of 'reversal' operates in some instances while 'identity' operates in some others? If the principle of 'reversal' had been consistently carried out in the above instance, the mourners should have gone round an even number of times.

White rice grains are used in auspicious ritual, whereas rice grains yellowed with turmeric powder are used in inauspicious ritual. This is not the same as 'reversal' though akin to it. It is called 'confinement' here: certain ritual acts are confined to mourning and they may not be performed on auspicious occasions.

A mango or *pavili* tree which is growing in the burial-ground, and green, is cut down for the funeral pyre. The *entire tree* has to be used for cremating the corpse. If a branch or twig remains over, a chicken is killed and cremated with it. It is inauspicious not to use up the entire tree. Similarly, if a grave which is being dug has to be abandoned and another has to be started, a chicken is buried in the former. Otherwise there will be another death in the house in the near future.

[824] The leaves of the *bainé* palm (*caryota urens*) are associated with death: on the day before *māda* a *pandal* is put up before the mourning-house and the roof of the *pandal* is covered with *bainé* leaves. The corpse is fanned with a fan of *bainé* leaves. Again, when a man without relatives wants to have his obsequies performed during his lifetime alone, a *pandal* of *bainé* leaves is put up before his house.

While *bainé* leaves are used exclusively in funeral ritual, toddy is used on all kinds of ritual occasions. Systematization has not been carried to the extent of confining *all* products of the *bainé* palm to funeral ritual.

Rice yellowed with turmeric is sprinkled all along the way from the mourning-house to the place where the corpse is buried. Usually a man sprinkles the rice with his hands as he accompanies the funeral procession to the burial-ground. Sometimes, however, the rice is put into a bag and loaded on a pack-bullock. Two tiny holes are bored in this bag and the bullock is driven behind the corpse to the burial-ground. The bullock may not be used for any other purpose subsequently.

On the day before *māda*, first-grade mourners offer to the spirit of the dead person rice mixed with curd, plantain, and *ghī*. A quantity of this mixture is carried by him to the 'sacrificial post' in front of the mourning-house and placed on the plank on top of

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the post. After crows have consumed the offerings, the family friend kicks the post awry. On the next morning he cuts it down with an axe. The first-grade mourners pull down the stoves they had erected to cook their food.

In the above ritual is seen the destruction of articles used in mourning ritual, and the purpose of such destruction is to ensure their 'confinement' to mourning. Things associated with bad-sacredness and pollution themselves become bad-sacred and polluted. Consequently, they have to be destroyed.

'Inversion' and 'confinement' underlie more funeral rites than 'identity'. But it is important to note that 'identity' also exists. For instance, the corpse, which is ritually impure, is made to lie on a pure bench in the central hall. Besides, its head is made to touch the south-western pillar.

XI

Almost every Coorg adult chews betel leaves and areca-nut, and addicts chew all day. Lime paste is spread over the rough side of the leaf and the leaf is put into the mouth along with small bits of areca-nut. Frequently bits of *catechu* and tobacco are chewed along with betel leaves and areca-nut.

At night, after dinner, the men chew betel leaves in the veranda, and the women in one of the inner rooms. A man or woman looks forward to this part of the day: there is no more work to be done and everyone is at leisure. Talk flows freely.

The chewing of betel leaves is also intimately associated with married life. The husband and wife frequently chew betel together. The wife applies the paste, folds the leaf, and gives it to her husband. Until recently, among the upper castes in south India, unmarried boys and girls were told to keep away from betel leaves and areca-nut. Indulgence in betel leaves was a symbol of the married state.

Guests are offered betel leaves and areca-nut both to chew and to carry home. Failure to offer betel leaves to a guest would almost amount to an insult.

Betel leaves and areca-nut are indispensable on any ritual occasion. They must accompany every ritual gift or payment, whether it is made to another person or spirit or deity.

The chewing of betel leaves represents full participation in

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sister's son. His importance is stressed in ritual and in the exchange of gifts.

A man whose maternal uncle is alive may not eat curry made of bitter oranges or green plantains. A proverb tells us that a diver for pearls must make certain that his maternal uncle is holding the rope above. Diving for pearls is a notoriously hazardous occupation and the life of the diver is in the hands of the man who is holding the rope above. It requires the greatest vigilance on the latter's part. It is significant that the maternal uncle should be chosen for this task. It is a tribute to the strength of bond between a man and his mother's brother.

The maternal uncle, paternal aunt, and the married sister are all required to bring gifts, provisions, and sheets of cloth called *kēṭāmé* at the marriage of a man. An informant told me that he remembered his mother carrying twenty head-loads of *kēṭāmé* gifts to her younger brother's wedding.

A party bringing *kēṭāmé* gifts is honoured with 'plantain honour' (*bāḷé birudu*): the leader of the party is asked to cut with his Coorg sword a row of three stout plantain stems fixed to the ground. A man who cuts through a stem at one stroke is a skilled swordsman: the blow must fall at an acute angle and must be delivered with firmness and strength.

The bringers of *kēṭāmé* gifts are given in return token gifts of cooked pork and sweet dishes. The host's band accompanies them a little distance when they leave.

Those relatives who brought *kēṭāmé* at wedding bring gifts of provisions and cloths called *aḍatalé* at death. They come accompanied by their band, and they are again given in return token gifts of cooked meat and sweet dishes.

Just before the corpse is buried or cremated certain important relatives perform a rite of segregation called *koḍa kukkuva*, the purpose of which is to break the bond between the dead person and his (or her) relatives. The relatives who have to take part in this rite are the dead person's spouse, eldest son, and 'cross-nephew' (i.e. a man's sister's son, or a woman's brother's son). The surviving spouse takes a mud pot, the son a tender coconut, and the 'cross-nephew' a bell-metal vessel with a spout at the side (*kindi*).

The three relatives march to a pond or well in the burial-ground after the bier has been deposited near the funeral pit or pyre. They have a dip in the pond, after which the family friend or his

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764 602 wife places on the spouse's head the mud vessel filled with water, the coconut on the eldest son's head, and the spouted vessel full of water on the 'cross-nephew's' head. The family friend marks the forehead of each of these mourners with a few rice-grains yellowed with turmeric, and adjusts a ring of twisted grass on the ring-finger of the left hand. A mango leaf is put into the mud pot and another into the spouted vessel, while the eldest son is given a third leaf to carry in his hand. A hole is bored in both the mud pot and coconut to enable the liquid inside to trickle down to the ground from the head as the mourners march in state from the pond to the bier. The 'cross-nephew' has to carry the spouted vessel in such a way that a little water drips from it through the spout all the time.

The mourners go round the bier thrice, moving anti-clockwise, and at the end of the third round the spouse stands near the corpse's left shoulder, the son by the right shoulder, and the 'cross-nephew' near the feet. A little of the water in each of the three 'vessels' is poured into a dining-dish.

The three mourners then salute the corpse, after which they again go round the corpse thrice, moving anti-clockwise, sprinkling rice yellowed with turmeric as they go. After the final round is completed each takes up his original position by the corpse. The spouse touches the bier thrice with his (or her) pot and then smashes it to pieces by knocking it against the frame of the bier. As he (or she) does this, he utters the funeral cry, 'Thou art ruined . . . (husband, father, &c.)'.

The son follows next and he cuts the coconut into two halves after touching the bier thrice with it. He throws the halves underneath the bier and utters the funeral cry. The 'cross-nephew' who comes last repeats his predecessors' actions, at the end of which he throws the spouted vessel under the bier.

Shri K. J. Chenappa tells me that the pot represents the affinal bond which is destroyed at death, while the seed (coconut) is carried by the son who continues the *okka*, and the 'cross-nephew' carries the spouted vessel. He represents another *okka* which is linked to the dead person's by the fact that the dead person was a sibling of the 'cross-nephew's' parent.

[594] Husband and wife constitute a legal, economic, ritual, and moral unity among Coorgs, and the sense of this unity is so great that the surviving spouse plays an even greater part in funeral rites than the eldest son, who represents the dead person's *okka*.

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The 'cross-nephew' stands for the solidarity of a man with his sister.

Close relatives of the dead person bring gifts of white cloths (*muri*). These cloths are carried by women and are received by a woman member of the mourning *okka* who keeps them folded behind the corpse's head. They are used for certain purposes at various points in the mourning ritual: for instance, the mourners of the first and second orders use them for the mourning uniform of waist-cloth and shoulder-cloth; they are used to cover the corpse while it is lying in the house; if it is decided to cremate the corpse, it is stripped of the white gown and then the body is covered with white cloths; and, finally, some cloths are given in charity to beggars and servants of the Coorg *okka*.

Relatives who bring gifts of cloth are usually accompanied by their band consisting of horn, pipe, and drum. They also bring a rifle with them. As they near the lane leading to the mourning *okka*, all the relatives junior to the dead person dress themselves in a waist-colth and shoulder-cloth. In addition, the women mourners unplait their hair and allow it to fall loosely over the back and shoulders. They keep the gift-cloths on their heads and they perform certain stylized movements with their hands which are suggestive of the beating of breasts and head, a common symbol of mourning all over India. As they come up the lane leading to the mourning house, a member of the party fires double shots. The band, rifle, and gifts of cloth are collectively referred to as *kellaṭi*. Relatives who brought *kēṭāmé* gifts at marriage are required to bring *kellaṭi* at death. The obligations of kinship require the bringing of such gifts at marriage and death, and such obligations are usually mutual between groups of kindred. In addition, the bringers of these gifts are honoured according to the traditional ritual idiom and given small gifts of cooked meat and sweet dishes. These gifts are not equivalent in economic value to the gifts brought, but still they embody the principle of reciprocity. Reciprocity does not mean equivalence of return on every occasion: equivalence is usually achieved over a long period of time.

While other relatives bring white cloths, the dead person's 'cross-nephew' or 'cross-niece' has to bring a gift of a red silk cloth (*kendanolli*). Red silk is more sacred than cotton, and the bringers of gifts of red silk are more important than those who bring cotton cloths. The 'cross-nephew' or 'cross-niece' is required to bring

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764 602 431 a gift of red silk cloth. The funeral song, however, tells us that both 'he who took and he who gave [daughters in marriage]' (*koṇḍavanu koḍtavanu*) brought gifts of red silk cloths. The divergence between [582] current usage and ancient custom can be explained by the supposition that cross-cousin marriage was widespread in the past. The custom of cross-cousin marriage leads to the overlapping of different kinds of kinship-bonds; and what was to begin with a cognatic bond becomes later an affinal bond.

602 585 When a man marries, his sister's husband acts as his 'best man' (*bōjakāra*), and when a woman marries, her brother's wife acts as her matron of honour (*bōjakarati*).[1] This no doubt gives importance to affinal kindred, but ultimately it may be looked upon as one of the numerous expressions of the solidarity prevalent between brother and sister. Again, it may also be an instance of the overlapping of several kinds of kinship-bonds, as the sister's husband or brother's wife might have been a cross-cousin before marriage.

764 602 431 *Saméya* gifts are brought by affines at death. These gifts consist of coconuts, coconut oil, puffed rice (*pori*), cooked meat, rice yellowed with turmeric, and three *kajjāyas* (a sweet dish) fried in castor oil. Mourners going behind the corpse scatter the *saméya* articles all the way from the mourning house to the burial-ground.

When a man is dead, representatives of his mother's natal *okka* have to bring *saméya*, and when a woman is dead, representatives of her natal *okka* have to bring *saméya*. *Saméya* is also prepared in the mourning house.

Saméya gifts stress the importance of the natal *okkas* of the women who have married into the mourning *okka*. They may also be regarded as giving importance to cross-cousins, as an affine is frequently also a cross-cousin.

602 585 Affines, when they are not already related to each other, are expected to be extremely formal towards each other. At marriage the groom's party are treated with extreme courtesy—warm water is offered to them to wash their hands and feet, a mat is spread for them to sit on, and puffed rice, coconut, and parched grams (*hurukulu*) are given them to eat. They are also given betel leaves and areca-nuts to chew. They come accompanied by their band. As they stand at some distance from the bride's house, a party from the bride's house goes to them carrying the articles mentioned

[1] I attended a wedding in which the *bōjakarati* was the bride's mother's sister's daughter, but I was told this was not very usual.

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lead to the elders having an argument, an argument which might later split the *okka*. Another proverb tells us that 'children's play leads to the *okka's* ruin'.

Marriage is very nearly universal among Coorgs, and bachelors and spinsters are very rare indeed. A man's social personality is fully developed only when he has married and become a father, and consequently a bachelor is regarded as one who is not fully developed.

It is believed that a bachelor dies with many unsatisfied desires in his heart. While a gold coin is placed in the mouth of the corpse of a married man, a bitter fruit is kept in the mouth of a bachelor's corpse. A bachelor's ghost is regarded as mischievous, and the ghost of a bachelor-warrior as even more mischievous.

During the periodical ancestor-propitiations in a Coorg *okka*, songs are sung recounting the deeds of each ancestor. The name of a bachelor-ancestor is omitted from such a song unless he had proved an exceptional success in life, or had died while fighting in battle. Such exceptional qualifications are not, however, required from a married ancestor. A bachelor's personality is normally incomplete, and only the achievement of exceptional social importance can outweigh this fact.

Sanskritic Hinduism prescribes marriage for every adult. And only a married man may perform certain important rites.[1] A man and his wife constitute a single spiritual entity, and a wife shares in the spiritual merit acquired by her husband. Sanskritic Hinduism also enjoins on the wife the duty of effacing herself completely for her husband.

The strength of the husband–wife bond and the subservience of the wife to the husband express themselves in ritual. When a Coorg couple bathe in the source of the river Kāvēri during the Kāvēri Festival, the ends of their garments are tied together: Hindus in every part of India observe this custom when they are bathing in a sacred river or tank.

Until recent years a Coorg bride and groom never sat together for the performance of *mūrta*. *Mūrta* was performed separately for the groom and bride in their respective houses on the first day of

[1] A Brahmin friend of mine married soon after the lapse of the required period of a year after the death of his father because the performance of certain rites like the periodical offerings to dead ancestors and the worship of the deities traditionally worshipped by his family required him to be married. He was the eldest son of his father.

2: Emeneau L-5 (1936-1937) 1938
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614 587 first husband's sib are extinguished with the formulas given in Appendix I, and in her father's house she is given to her new husband with the sammanda ceremony. A woman regains a 614 586 permanent place in her original sib only by divorce. This may happen if she is grossly and persistently immoral or if she and her husband are continually at odds with one another (the former is much the more usual cause). In such cases the aruvës of the two families (see ref. [1], p. 130) negotiate between the two parties and if both families agree to a divorce, the woman relinquishes all claims to a place in her husband's sib and may never regain it by another marriage into that sib. She regains a place in her father's sib and keeps it, unless as rarely happens she should be sought in marriage by another man from another sib. My informant emphasized significantly that the woman is readmitted to her original sib not automatically but only if the sib is persuaded to agree to it. In the sammanda ceremony by a piece of symbolism the woman retains the right of readmission [585] to her original sib. The aruvë of the groom's party is given by her party eleven out of twelve pebbles; the remaining one is kept by her sib. This right to readmission is exercised in case [764] of divorce or of remarriage if her first husband dies. It carries with it only one other right in her father's sib, viz. if she should die in the house of her parents and the burial-ground of her husband's sib should be at an inconvenient distance, she may be buried [851] in that of her father's sib. Children by a woman's first husband always remain members of his sib, whether or not she leaves it by divorce or remarriage into another sib. If at the time of her leaving her husband's sib any children should be too young to fend for themselves, she may retain charge of them until they attain an age when they can care for themselves, when they return to the house of their own sib.

613 Marriage is forbidden also between a couple who are related to one another by descent through females only from a common female ancestor. There is not however among the Coorgs the same division of the people among female lines that I have elsewhere described for the Todas.[1] It seems probable from my informant's accounts that the relationships in female lines tend to be remembered for a comparatively small number of generations and even in some cases to be neglected when they are remembered, if it is considered that the degree of relationship is not close enough to hinder marriage. What degree would be considered distant enough to allow of intermarriage I could not elicit with any accuracy, but it seems that three or four degrees might be sufficiently distant, i.e. a relationship that is traced back through females to a common great-grandmother or great-great-grandmother. The proverb quoted in the fifth paragraph below refers also to this type of marriage. 2/1

[1] American Anthropologist, 39, 103–112.

7/1 [see cat. 116, pp. 142–144 -- Analyst] 2/1 [see p129]

2:Emeneau L-5 (1936-1937) 1938
AW5 Coorg AW5

584 The marriage is at present arranged by the families of the young people. The family of the young man approaches the family of a girl who is considered a suitable match and after much discussion arrangements are made; the girl is informed of them and in most cases she acquiesces. The authority of the family is ideally supreme. Young people have many opportunities of meeting, or at least of seeing one another, and as we should expect, matches that are not likely to be endurable are tacitly avoided by the elders of the family. Cases are known however where a girl has refused the arranged marriage and for various reasons elder members of her family have agreed with her and prevented the marriage; cases are also known where a young man after suggesting for himself a particular girl and carrying with him most of the other members of his family has found opposition from an elderly female member who disapproves of the girl and he has had to give up his idea. Life in a joint family, as is well known in other parts of India, is a matter [596] of the adjustment of conflicting stresses. The evidence of the [593] marriage song seems to show that at some time in the past a young man went out himself to look for a suitable girl and settled 584 the matter himself, without reference to his family until the time 174 for the formal arrangement arrived. There is probably some 533 historical truth in the account, but the period at which this [114] was the custom is not known. Richter's account of 1870 implies, though it does not mention explicitly, a state of things like that at the present day.

584 When a marriage is to be formally arranged and fixed, the aruvē[1] of the young man's family accompanied by representatives of this family, e.g. the man's father, his elder brother, or a brother-in-law, go to the house of the girl's family. There they meet the aruvē and the representatives of the girl's family. Formally the man's party declare that he will marry the girl and the girl's party that they will give the girl, and the aruvēs guarantee that [342] their respective parties will hold to the agreement. The cere- [778] mony is performed in the nellaki of the house, i.e. the portion of the central hall opposite the door, where a lamp hangs. It is regarded as the sacred part of the house and apparently the sanctity centers in the lamp, before which prayers are offered [585] in the evening to the ancestors of the sib (or nowadays to any other gods in addition). Most of the ceremonies to be described

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[1] Two sibs stand in mutual relationship to one another, so that each provides an aruvē for the other on certain ceremonial occasions. Their duties in connexion with marriages are described in the text. At a funeral the aruvē is present and seems to have been originally entrusted with supervision of the ceremonial. At present the office tends to become a mere formality and the aruvē does not necessarily come from the traditional sib. The man of the traditional sib is called maṇṇaruvē 'land-aruvē'; one who is engaged for the occasion only is ponnaruvē 'gold-aruvē' and this term seems to carry with it some derogatory connotation.

3:Iyer E-5 (no date) 1948 AW5 Coorg AW5

Kinship

The system of kinship among the Coorgs is of the type called classificatory. The most important feature is the use of the same kinship terms for mother's brother and father-in-law on the one hand and for father's sister and mother-in-law on the other. The fundamental feature of the system is the application of the same kinship terms in addressing most persons of the same generation and sex. 601

Social Organization

The Coorgs have a council of elders called Takka Mukkyastam who act as the moral censors of their social affairs, though they are not invested with magisterial power by Government. The authority of the village Takkas extends over offences against social customs, non-attendance of public feasts, and improper conduct during the same, as for example, drunkenness. The offender has to appear before the village elders at the *ambala*, an open council room on the village green, where the matter is discussed. The presiding Takka pronounces the verdict which may amount to a fine of ten rupees. In the event of refusal to pay the amount, the offender may be excommunicated, when he may appeal to the district Takkas, and their decision is final. An outcaste Coorg may be reinstated on payment of the fine. The influence of the official class, and increasing knowledge of the law tend to subvert the authority of the Takkas, who relax their control by accommodating themselves to changed conditions, and do not venture on any excommunication. 623 692 [634] [178]

Funeral Ceremonies

The Coorgs bury their dead. The common people are buried in the village burial ground, and children in some reserved place near the home. Men of importance have a tomb built over their graves with a masonry bull, the emblem of Siva, surrounding it. When a man dies, messages are sent round to every house of the village community. Each house must at least send one male and one female member to render service on the occasion. The Aruva of the family has the direction of affairs of the ceremonies. Under his direction the corpse is washed and dressed by the man who has followed the funeral summons, if the deceased is a man, but if a woman, by the women. The handling of the dead by the funeral party does not ceremonially defile them. It is enough for them to bathe and change clothes on reaching home. The corpse is then carried to the hall and laid on a funeral bed near to which a lighted lamp is placed. The whole company gather round and break out in loud lamentations, beating the breast and tearing the hair. Guns are also fired in honour of the dead. Towards evening, the corpse is brought into the yard in an open bier, a little water is poured into its mouth by the relatives and a piece of money is deposited in a copper dish, containing a little coconut milk, saffron, rice 764 [203] [431]

3:Iyer E-5 (no date) 1948 AW5 Coorg AW5

764 and well water. The corpse is then carried to the burial ground. Each [431] funeral attendant approaches, dips his finger in the copper dish, moistens the lips of the corpse with a drop or two and lays a piece of money in it. This collection goes to meet the funeral expenses. After all present have taken leave of the departed, the body is divested of its best clothes and ornaments, and decently laid into the grave or on the pile, the contents of the funeral [783] lamp dish are thrown upon it, and the covering of the grave or the burning of the pile concludes the ceremony. Pollution lasts for eleven days. In the case of a husband's funeral, the widow with two of her own and relative's children, carrying a brass vessel and a coconut, brings an earthen pot full of water and carries it round the corpse thrice on the funeral ground, the coconut is broken and its water put into a dish for the purpose already, mentioned, the widow standing near the feet of the corpse and with averted face lets the earthen water pot fall sideways from her shoulder to the ground as a symbol of her shattered happiness, and the Aruva breaks the brass bangles on her wrist. The next morning the relatives remove her [765] garments, but her hair remains. As a mark of mourning, a woman leaves [589] off wearing for one year her kerchief on the head and ties it round her neck. While in this state of widowhood, she neither wears bangles, nor necklace, nor ear-ornaments.

765 On the twenty-eighth day or some time later, as late as six months, when due honour is intended for the departed, a final ceremony, the Thithi, is performed. In the interval the relatives who offer themselves for this service undergo some fasting. They forego the early and the second meal. At noon they bathe, prepare their own simple food, eat part of it themselves, and give the rest to the crows, which consume it for the dead. When the Thithi, the great day of the conclusion of funeral rites, arrives, the whole village community is again invited to the feast in honour of the departed and for the repose of the soul which ceremony concludes the funeral rites.

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COORG TRIBES AND CASTES

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Disposal of the Dead

The Amma Coorgs used to bury the dead which is now being abandoned. Pollution lasts for ten days.

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Occupation

The Amma Coorgs are agriculturists They do all agricultural operations, ploughing, sowing and harvesting. Both men and women work.

Conclusion

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The Amma Coorgs follow the Coorgs in point of inheritance. They worship the Hindu deities and observe Hindu holidays. They are inferior to the Coorgs in physical appearance and strength of body. They are now trying to improve their condition. They are strict vegetarians. They marry within the same *gotra* This may eventually hasten their extinction.

[P 69 ff. have not been Processed for this file]

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

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"Jáwa, jáwa, baby dear!
"When the baby's mother comes,
"She will give her darling milk.

"Jáwa, jáwa, baby dear!
"When the baby's father comes,
"He will bring you cocoanut,

"Jáwa, jáwa, baby dear!
"When the baby's brother comes,
"He will bring a little bird.

"Jáwa, jáwa, baby dear!
"When the baby's sister comes,
"She will bring a dish of rice."

Are we not reminded of our own familiar nursery-rhyme:—

"Baby, baby bunting, Father's gone a hunting.
"He's gone to get a rabbit's skin, to wrap my little baby in."

e. Death and funeral ceremonies.

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[783] A case of death defiles the house for seven days. The corpse is either burnt or buried. The bodies of the young, who die under 16 years of age and those of women are buried; those of other persons, especially of old people are burnt.

763 On the death of a member of a Coorg family, messengers are despatched to every house of the village-community. As on a wedding, each house must send at least one male and one female member to do service on the occasion. The Aruva [624] of the family has again the direction of the ceremonies. 764 Under his superintendence the corpse is washed and dressed by the men, who have followed the funeral summons, if the deceased is a man, but if a woman, by the women. It is remarkable, that the Coorgs see no defilement in the handling of a corpse by the funeral party. It is enough for them, to bathe and to change clothes on their return home. The

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

preparations ended, the body is carried into the middle apartment (nadumane) of the house and laid upon a funeral bed, near to which a lighted lamp is placed. Instead of oil, those who can afford it, burn on this occasion clarified cow's butter in half a cocoanut placed on a handful of rice in a copper-dish. The whole company gathers round him and breaks out into loud wailing, beating the breast, tearing the hair, much in the usual Hindu style. Guns are also fired in honor of the dead. Towards evening the corpse is brought into the yard, a little water is poured into its mouth by the relatives, and a piece of money deposited in a copper-dish, containing a little cocoamilk, saffron, rice and well-water. Now the body is carried to the burial or burning ground. Each funeral guest approaches, dips his finger into the copper dish, moistens the lips of the corpse with a drop or two, and lays a piece of money into the plate. This collection goes to defray the expenses of the funeral. After all present have thus taken their last leave of the departed, the body is deprived of the ornaments, and laid in the grave or upon the pile, the contents of the funeral-lamp-dish are thrown upon it, and now the covering of the grave, or the burning of the pile, concludes the ceremony. Before this last scene, however, some relatives must be set apart for funeral observances until the Dhiti, the great ceremonial day, which is sometimes celebrated on the 28th day after the death of a person, i. e. at the end of the lunar month in which the decease has occurred, sometimes later, as late as six months, when peculiar honor is intended to be done to the departed. In the interval the relatives, who offer themselves for this service, have to perform a lesser course of fasting. They forego the early and the second meal, at six and nine o'clock. At noon they bathe, prepare their own food, eat part of it themselves (it consists of rice and a little pickled vegetables), and give the rest to the crows, which consume it for the dead. When the Dhiti,

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

765 the great day of the conclusion of funeral rites, arrives, the whole village community is again invited to a feast in honor of the departed and for the quiet of his soul, and thus the last end of a Coorg's earthly course has come.

●764 539 The Coorg funeral song is most pathetic and touches a kindred chord in every sorrowing heart:—

Funeral Song.

Woe! my father, thou art gone!
Woe is me! For ever gone!
Gone with all thy soul of virtue!
Oh! how can I live my father!
Woe! thy days are now concluded,
And the share, assigned to thee
By the Lord, is now consumed
And no further portion granted.
Oh! thy wish was not to die,
But to stay among the living.
Surely, man came to this world
But to die; not one of us
Is exempted from this doom.
Onward! onward roll the years;
Oh! how soon were thine concluded!
Like the eagle in the sky
Thou wast roaming here on earth.
Woe! the string of choicest pearls
Round the neck of our children
Is for ever burst and scattered!
Woe! the clear and brilliant mirror,
Fallen out of our hand,
Fallen to the ground, and broken!
Woe! the wrath of God Almighty,
Floods of fiery indignation,
Beating on the lofty mountains,
Swept their summit to the ground!
Like the enemies at night,
Breaking into peaceful houses,

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856 - 1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

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Slaying all the valiant men,
Even thus has God Almighty
Suddenly cut off thy days.
Like the top of Tumbanale
In the sultry days of summer,
When the sun is hot and burning,
And the grass is set on fire,
Thus, O father, was this house
Desolated by thy death!
As the raging storms in June
Break the fruitful plantain trees
In the garden round our house,
Thus hast thou cut off, O father!
When the floods destroy the shed,
Where the stores of wood were sheltered,
All the house is in distress.
When the meeting hall is ruined,
All the villagers lament.
If the temple is destroyed,
All the land is full of sorrow.
Thus is our house distressed
By thy sudden death, O father!
As they quench the shining flame
Of the beauteous golden lamp,
Thus has God destroyed thy life!
As the stately Banyan tree
In the lofty mountain forest,
Which the ax has never touched,
Is uprooted by the whirlwind;
Like the bright and shining leaf
Of the royal Sampigé,
Broken from the stem and withered;
Thus hast thou cut off, O father!
In the days of life thy hand
Had supported our house,
Thou hast planted our fields,
Thou hast laid the corner-stone,
And completed our mansion
To the roof, with costly timber.

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

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Thou hast built the solid gate,
And the courts around the house.
Oh! my father; yesterday
Fallen on the bed of sickness,
And to-day before the feet
Of the Lord of earth and heaven,
And tomorrow, like the sun
Setting in the cloudy sky,
Thou shalt sink into the grave.
Woe! my father, thou art gone!
Woe! my father, gone for ever!

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4. POPULAR FESTIVALS OF THE COORGS.

The festivals of the Coorgs are not numerous. A weekly day of rest is recognised as little by the Coorgs as by other Hindus.

The two great annual festivals take place in quick succession towards the end of the year. The *Kávéri-feast* in Tulámása i. e. the time of the sun's entering into the sign of Libra in October, and the *Huttari* or Harvest-feast in November or December.

Before the monsoon in April and may the *Bhagavati-festival* is observed all over Coorg and in August, generally at the first break of the monsoon, the *Keilmurta* or festival of arms, is celebrated by the youths and men of Coorg.

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a. The Kávéri-feast.

About the middle of October all Coorg prepares for the grand festival of Kávéri. The sun has gained the ascendency over the monsoon clouds. A few passing showers only may still be expected. The rice valleys are clothed with rich paddy approaching maturity; the forests and grass hills resplendent with the freshness and beauty of spring. Every Coorg house sends one or two representatives to Tala-Kávéri. Also pil-

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

guest, but in reality as a prisoner, until by stratagem he returned to Coorg. Vírarája, however, lived for several years as a prisoner in the Fort of Periapatna, until he escaped over the frontier into his mountain home and asserted his independence. General Welsh confounds father and son. Again Lingarája was no longer a "boy" when his brother Vírarája died, but a man of 34 years of age. Finally the Coorgs as little worshipped their Rájahs as Gods, as did the Romans their Cæsars, when they burnt incense before their images!

"On the 19th of the same month, having heard much in praise of the sport in Coorg, and being at leisure for such a trip, I set out from Bangalore, in company with Lieut. W. Williamson, a young man of my own corps, both a keen and hardy sportsman as well as a very agreeable companion. We travelled post, in palanquin, to Vírarájendrapet, a distance of one hundred and fifty miles. On the 22nd of March after a hearty breakfast, provided for us by the Rájah's people, *gratis*, we mounted two large elephants, at daybreak, and proceeded over hills and through vales, up and down, zigzag, now at the bottom of deep ravines, then at the top of precipices, till, at last, after eight hours' fagging, we reached the palace built for the accommodation of Europeans outside the stonefort of Mercara, the capital.

"This place is delightfully situated on an eminence, near the summit of a range of lofty and difficult mountains. The pass up these mountains being fortified and defended, however, would make it a very strong place, for it completely commands every approach on the other side. The distance we estimated at twenty-four miles. The Rájah's own palace is inside the fort; but his horse and elephant stables are outside on the slope of the glacis. The town is remarkably clean and well built, about half a mile off by an excellent high road, and at the farther extremity there is a rising ground, with a strong mud barrier, after entering which, you come upon

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

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a small plain with a magnificent tomb, erected by the present Rájah to the memory of his late brother and his wife. It is much in the style of Mahommedan edifices, being a wide square with a handsome dome in the centre and four turrets at the angles. On the top of the dome is a gold ball, with a weathercock above it, and all the window bars are made of solid brass.

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"On this spot, by appointment, we met the Mahá Swámi, at half past three in the evening. He was dressed in a Major-general's uniform, appeared to be about thirty years of age, with very handsome features, and a person in which were joined both activity and strength. He immediately shook hands with us, and desired us to be seated, after a short conversation in Hindustáni, which he at first addressed to an interpreter, until he found that I could speak and understand him in that language; he then produced several rifles, ready loaded, ordered cocoanuts to be hoisted on the tops of spears, fifty yards off, and then desired us to fire. Suffice it to say, he beat us both most completely, splitting every nut he fired at in the centre, while we either struck the sides or missed entirely. After this, he asked us to take a ride with him; a beautiful English horse was brought to me, an Arabian to Lieutenant Williamson, and he himself also rode a very fine Arabian. We rattled about in the square for half an hour, when he desired us to alight and rest ourselves; and taking a long spear, performed several feats with it still on horseback, with great grace and dexterity. Our horses being brought again, we remounted, and proceeded with him to the fort; the Rájah insisting on our riding one on each side of him all the way. On entering his palace, we were amused by a set of dancing girls, keeping time to reels and country dances, played on two fiddles; and the Mahá Swámi shewed us various portraits of himself, the King, the Prince of Wales, General Wellesley, &c. He then took us into another apartment, and

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

to be called "Ránipetta" in honour of Queen Victoria. The town, which 15 years ago was almost entirely composed of wretched thatched mud-huts, bears now, in consequence of its profitable coffee traffic and exorbitant prices permitted by free trade, the stamp of prosperity. Out of its 850 houses 281 are tiled, most of them brick built and two storied and inhabited by merchants and tradesmen. The population of 3859 souls—without the Regiment—comprises 43 different castes, but no Coorgs live in the Petta. The Petta-*Subadar's Kacheri* occupies the highest point of the town and behind it are situated the Tombs of the Coorg Rájahs (vide p. 182). Under Capt. Cole's direction Lieut. Mackenzie, the Assistant Superintendent, has greatly interested himself in the amelioration of the sanitary condition of the Petta. The streets are broad and clean; two small tanks and a number of wells and running streams supply wholesome water. Every Friday there is a market, hence Mercara is also called *Shukravára-sante* (Friday-market). In the principal street—locally the High-street—the daily requisites for food and raiment are displayed. People from Nanjarájpatna and the Mysore country bring: dry grain—such as, rági, gram, rice of the superior sorts, dál, wheat, green gram, Bengal gram—, jaggory, tamarind, potatoes, chillies, onions, garlic, turmeric, mustard, coriander, oil seeds, castor oil, sesamum oil, tobacco, betel leaves, chunam, baskets, eggs, fowl, sheep, goats, etc. Máplas from Tellicherry and Cannanore import cocoanuts, arekanuts, cocoanut oil, and dry fish; Coorgs and other ryots bring clean rice, plantains, oranges, pineapples and straw; the merchants and petty dealers spread out in their shops or in the street their merchandise: cotton, silk and woolen fabrics; potters pile up their many-shaped vessels, tailors expose their gay, ready made clothes, money-changers squat before their stores of copper coins, liquor shops attract the crowd by their gaily

632 361 [362] [162] [764] [177] [364] [312] 632 443 438 439